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S&H Form: (2/01)
Attorney Docket No. 1344.1071

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:

Hiroaki HARADA, et al.

Application No.: 09/910,716

Group Art Unit: 3626

Confirmation No.: 1801

Filed: July 20, 2001

Examiner: Gilligan, Christopher L.

For: INSURANCE TASK PROCESSING METHOD, INSURANCE TASK PROCESSING PROGRAM, COMPUTER-READABLE STORAGE MEDIUM RECORDED WITH INSURANCE TASK PROCESSING PROGRAM, AND INSURANCE TASK PROCESSING SYSTEM

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This is in response to the Office Action mailed December 19, 2005 and having a response due January 19, 2006.

In the Office Action, the Examiner subjected the claims to a restriction requirement. The Examiner required restriction to one of the following two Groups of claims:

- I. Claims 1-12, drawn to processing solicitation-to-insurance information.
- II. Claims 13-19, drawn to encrypting transactional information using a secret key.

Applicants hereby elect the Group I (claims 1-12) with traverse.

It is submitted that the non-elected Group II claims (claims 13-19) are so closely related to elected claims 1-12 that they should remain in the same application. The elected claims 1-12 are directed to an insurance task processing method, program, recording medium and system. Similarly, claims 13-19 are directed to an insurance task processing method, program, recording medium and system. There have been no references cited to shown any necessity for requiring restriction and, in fact, it is believed that the Examiner could find references containing features related to both sets of claims in the same field of technology. While it is noted that the Examiner

has identified different sub-classifications within the same class, it is believed that classification is not conclusive on the question of restriction. It is believed moreover, that evaluation of both sets of claims would not provide an undue burden upon the Examiner at this time, in comparison with the additional expense and delay to applicants in having to protect the additional subject matter recited by the Group II claims by filing a divisional application.

M.P.E.P. § 803 sets forth the criteria for restriction between patentably distinct inventions. (A) indicates that the inventions must be independent (see M.P.E.P. § 802.01, § 806.04, § 808.01) or distinct as claimed (see M.P.E.P. § 806.05 – 806.05(i)); and (B) indicates that there must be a serious burden on the Examiner if restriction is required. The Examiner has not set forth any reasons why there would be a serious burden to examine all claims.

In summary, reconsideration of the Examiner's restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: January 18, 2006

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